



Anielewicz, Mordecai

(1919 or 1920–1943), Commander of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. Kibbutz Yad Mordecai is named in honor of Anielewicz.

Born in Warsaw, Anielewicz became a leader of the Zionist youth movement *Ha-Shomer ha-Tsa'ir* at a young age. At the outset of the war, Anielewicz fled Warsaw for Vilna in Soviet-occupied eastern Poland. He attempted to set up an escape route to Palestine, but was caught by Soviet officials. After his release, Anielewicz spearheaded an effort to send a group back to German-occupied Poland to continue the movement's activities in secret. Anielewicz was among the first to volunteer. He helped publish an underground newspaper and organized meetings and seminars. He also made illegal trips outside Warsaw to visit comrades in other ghettos.

In June 1941, upon hearing reports of the mass murder of Jews, Anielewicz set up a self-defense organization in the Warsaw Ghetto. In the summer of 1942 the Germans deported all but 60,000 of Warsaw's Jews. Anielewicz saw that the Jewish Fighting Organization (*Zydowska Organizacja Bojowa*, ZOB) was very weak and thus rejuvenated the group. Most other Jewish underground groups subsequently merged with the ZOB. In November 1942, Anielewicz became their commander.

On January 18, 1943, the Germans surprised the ZOB with a second deportation. The ZOB staged a street battle, commanded by Anielewicz. Four days later, the Germans ceased the deportation. The Jews interpreted this as a victory for the resistance. For the next 3 months, Anielewicz led the ZOB in intensive preparations for the next round of fighting.

The final deportation of Warsaw's Jews commenced on April 19, 1943. This deportation was a cue for the resistance to launch the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, commanded by Anielewicz. After a fierce battle, Anielewicz and many of his soldiers retreated to the bunker at 18 Mila Street. Although he understood the end was near, Anielewicz wrote: "My life's dream has come true; I have lived to see Jewish resistance in the ghetto in all its greatness and



glory." The bunker fell on May 8. Most of the ZOB members, including Anielewicz, were killed. (see also Warsaw and Resistance, Jewish.)